

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney***

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hurt1128.rel  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Nov. 28, 2006

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Jersey City Man Admits Bilking N.Y. Private School;  
Previously Pleaded Guilty to Embezzling from Housing Authority

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(More)

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NEWARK – A Jersey City man who was the former business manager for the Brooklyn Day Montessori School in Brooklyn, N.Y. pleaded guilty today to embezzling between \$120,000 and \$200,000 in school funds from 2005 to 2006, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

The business manager, Eric D. Hurt, also was a former accounting manager for the Hoboken Housing Authority from 2001 to 2004. Hurt pleaded guilty in August 2006 to embezzling funds totaling \$111,083 from that agency.

Hurt, 38, of Jersey City, admitted in front of U.S. District Judge Harold A. Ackerman that when he was with the school from 2005 to 2006, he issued salary and bonus payments to himself from the school well in excess of his authorized salary; made unauthorized wire transfers of money from a school bank account to himself; and used the school's ATM card to make unauthorized cash withdrawals from a school bank account for his personal benefit. Hurt further admitted that his fraud caused a loss of between \$120,000 and \$200,000.

Earlier this year, in August 2006, Hurt had admitted before the same judge that he embezzled Hoboken Housing Authority funds – in all, 34 checks written to himself – between about August 2001 and February 2004.

To conceal that embezzlement, Hurt admitted that he falsely reported to the Housing Authority that the payees on the checks were various vendors doing business with the Housing Authority by entering them that way in the general operating fund check register. Hurt, at that time, pled guilty to two counts of a five-count criminal Information: one count of embezzlement and one count of subscribing to a false federal income tax return for tax year 2003.

The wire fraud count to which Hurt pleaded guilty today carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Originally, Hurt was scheduled to be sentenced today on the earlier charges, before evidence of this new embezzlement scheme came to light. Judge Ackerman scheduled sentencing on both guilty pleas for April 4, when conduct from both of the crimes will be considered.

During his plea hearing, Hurt also admitted that he, from his office at the School in Brooklyn, would telephone representatives of the school's payroll company in Piscataway, New Jersey to issue salary and bonus payments to himself in amounts far in excess of his authorized payroll amount

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Leslie G. Wiser; Special Agents of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Ruth Ritzema; and Special

Agents of the IRS Criminal Investigations Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Patricia J. Haynes, with the investigation of Hurt's fraud at the School.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney James Nobile, chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Defense Counsel: Brian Eyerman, Esq., Fort Lee